

# THE MACOMB DAILY

TUESDAY

April 5, 2011

● MACOMB COUNTY'S LARGEST DAILY NEWSPAPER ●

## Alexander Macomb honored with plaque

By Chad Selweski

Journal Register Newspapers

A Historical award designed to give county namesake more recognition.

Alexander Macomb, Macomb County's namesake, was one of the first graduates of West Point, a war hero, the commander of all U.S. armies who was so revered that, upon his death, he was honored with an elaborate funeral in Washington and was buried in a marble mausoleum in the congressional cemetery.

Yet, many Macomb County residents know little about Gen. Macomb.

A plaque unveiled at the county Administration Building in downtown Mount Clemens on Monday is designed to spark interest in the general and to salute those who have excelled in preserving Macomb County history.

Unfortunately, a lot of people don't know enough about the man," said Don Green, a longtime local historian, who treated the small crowd at Monday's plaque dedication ceremony to a detailed version of Macomb's life story.

The plaque features a reproduction of an engraving of Macomb that was done in 1836. It lists all the previous recipients of the Alexander Macomb Historical Award Individuals who have won the award, which is bestowed annually by the Macomb County Historical Commission, include Green and Karl Mark Pall, a longtime history buff. Organizations who have received the award include The Macomb Daily and Selfridge Air National Guard Base.

The plaque, created by AOC Engraving of Mount Clemens, also leaves space for future award winners. It is displayed in the Administration Building's lobby, which is filled with historic artifacts.

Macomb's new county executive, Mark Hackel, was the keynote speaker at the dedication ceremony, which was held one day after Gen. Macomb's birthday and on "Macomb Heritage Day," a distinction created by the county Board of Commissioners.

Hackel saluted the "passion and commitment of the Historical Commission, and he urged the group to choose Cindy Donahue, a county employee who has collected historical information for decades, as their 2011 award winner.



**The plaque honoring Gen. Alexander Macomb and local historical preservationists was unveiled at a ceremony Monday by Macomb County Board chair Kathy Vosburg and county Executive Mark Hackel.**

Hackel noted that Monday's ceremony comes just days after a milestone, when the U.S. Census found that Macomb County had surpassed Detroit in population. Through the celebration of Macomb's heritage does not match the big celebrations of "Macomb County Day" decades ago, Hackel said it's important to remember our forefather.

"He was born nearly 200 years ago, but people today still recognize him and talk about him, because his history is still alive in this county," the county executive said.

Green, a Clinton Township resident, said the Macomb name is not only known in this county, but is the label applied to cities and structures far and wide. He said a Google search on the Internet for Macomb produces 5.7 million web page hits.

According to green, here is the shorthand version of Alexander Macomb's story: born in British-occupied Detroit in 1782; was a member of West Point's second graduating class: helped fortify Fort Mackinac on Mackinac Island and Fort Gratiot near Port Huron; was a hero of the War of 1812; was honored by Lewis Cass, the governor of the Michigan territory, in 1818 when the territory's third county was created and named after the general; eventually became commander of all U.S. armed forces; died in 1841.

For more information on Alexander Macomb or the history of the county named after him, go online to [macombcountymi.gov/historicalcommission](http://macombcountymi.gov/historicalcommission).